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## **Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary nominated for US World Heritage Tentative List**

American Samoa's very own Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary is among 14 United States sites to be included on a new US World Heritage Tentative List. Popular US World Heritage sites include Yellowstone National Park, the Everglades, and the Statue of Liberty.

The 14 properties on the new list are eligible for nomination consideration by the United States to the UNESCO World Heritage List, which recognizes the most significant cultural and natural treasures on the planet.

The list was announced by US Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne who said that each of the 14 sites is important to Americans as well as others around the world.

The Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary is administered by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). It is described as a small pristine bay on the Samoan Island of Tutuila that does not include immediately adjacent shore lands.

The refuge is a fringing coral reef ecosystem within an eroded volcanic crater.

The bay contains a vast array of tropical marine organisms, including corals, marine mammals, and threatened and endangered species, including hawksbill and green sea turtles. It is a vibrant tropical reef marine ecosystem, filled with populations of coral reef fish and marine invertebrates. The scenic beauty of the bay and its surroundings are also exceptional.

The preparation of a Tentative List is a necessary first step in the process of nominating a site to the World Heritage List, as a country cannot nominate a property unless it has been on its Tentative List for a minimum of one year.

Neither inclusion in the Tentative List nor inscription as a World Heritage Site imposes legal restrictions on owners or neighbors of sites, nor does it give the United Nations any management authority or ownership rights in US World Heritage Sites, which continue to be subject to US law.

The new sites announced on the United States World Heritage Tentative List can be considered over the next decade for formal nomination by the United States as World Heritage Sites.

In addition to Fagatele Bay, other nominated sites include the Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona, the White Sands National Monument in New Mexico, and the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge in Georgia.

Countries are limited to nominating no more than two sites in any given year. The first time that any US World Heritage nominations drawn from the new List could go forward would be at the beginning of 2009 - with consideration by the World Heritage Committee likely to occur in the summer of 2010 - because countries are asked to wait a year before submitting nominations from their tentative lists.

The Committee, made up of representatives from 21 nations elected as the governing body of the World Heritage Convention, makes the final decisions on which nominations to accept on the World Heritage List at its annual meeting held each summer.

The National Park Service manages all or parts of 17 of the 20 US World Heritage Sites and serves as the principal technical agency for the US Government to the Convention.

In 2005, the US won a fourth term on the World Heritage Committee and will serve until next year.

## Lt. Governor Ipulasi departs territory, appoints AG Fepulea'i Afa Ripley as Acting Governor

Lt. Governor Ipulasi Aitofele Sunia has appointed ASG Attorney General Fepulea'i Afa Ripley as Acting Governor. In a general memorandum announcing the appointment, Ipulasi said this means Fepulea'i "shall act as Governor" until either he or Governor Togiola Tulafono returns to the territory.

Ipulasi departed the territory on Thursday, Jan. 31 for Washington DC to attend the National Association of Secretaries of State conference. En route, Ipulasi will stop by Straub Hospital in Honolulu, HI to visit Governor Togiola who is reported to be in good spirits and recovering well.

(Togiola was medically evacuated to Tripler US Army Medical Center in Honolulu in mid-January after undergoing an appendectomy and being twice admitted to the LBJ Medical Center in Fagaalu. He was released from Tripler but then re-admitted to Straub after coming down with an "unexpected" high fever from which he is currently recovering).

"Please extend to Acting Governor Fepulea'i your customary support and cooperation," Ipulasi wrote.

## Registration opens for interested Flag Day performers

From now until Feb. 8, all groups interested in performing for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Flag Day Performing Arts Festival can sign up and register at the Jean P. Hayden Museum in Fagatogo.

The program, a yearly event that includes song and dance performances by church, village, community, and youth groups, is hosted by the American Samoa Council on Arts, Culture, and Humanities.

The Festival is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and scheduled to take place April 14-16 at the Pavilion in Fagatogo (Malaeoletalu).

All interested parties must register and sign up in person, as no telephone registrations will be accepted.

## Tenth Pacific Festival of the Arts to host aiga bus competition

The visual arts subcommittee for the 10<sup>th</sup> Pacific Festival of the Arts will be hosting a local aiga bus competition scheduled to take place Feb. 18, the holiday marking George Washington's birthday.

The announcement was made during a meeting held between the local Chamber of Commerce and the Festival's organizing committee on January 24.

The subcommittee will select a total of 12 aiga buses which will be used to transport VIPs and visiting guests between Fagatogo and Utulei during the opening of the art shows.

The decision to include the aiga buses in the Festival, according to comments made by subcommittee chairperson Reggie Meredith, was based on the fact that aiga buses – most of them decorated with beautiful pictures and colorful graphics – have long been a part of the local community and also, a wonderful way to display and promote local artwork.

Festival organizers are urging members of the local business community to provide donations to use as prizes for the competition. The donations need not be monetary, but may include company hats and t-shirts.

## HISTORICAL NOTES

By: Stan Sorensen, Historian, Office of the Governor

**On February 1, 1940**, American Samoa's civilian population was recorded as 12,908. 2,597 of these lived in Manu'a, and 147 on Swains Island. The non-Samoan population included 31 *papalagi*, four Japanese, two Filipinos and one Chinese. Naval station personnel totalled 263.

**On February 2, 1990**, Hurricane "Ofa" began its four-day rampage through the Samoan archipelago, causing widespread damage.

**On February 4, 1887**, the *Taimua* and *Faipule* (the legislature of Samoa) approved the "Treaty of Political Alliance and Confederation," which Mr. John E. Bush, Hawaiian King Kalakaua's Envoy to the King of Samoa, had brought on January 3, 1887. This approval allowed Samoa to join King Kalakaua's Polynesian Confederation.

**On February 6, 1944**, the Commandant, U.S. Naval Station Tutuila (Captain John G. Moyer) assumed control of the Marine Barracks (formerly commanded by a Marine Corps Brigadier General) as the war moved westward and American Samoa's importance decreased.

**On February 6, 1975**, Frank C. Mockler completed his term as American Samoa's tenth appointed civil governor (acting: since October 15, 1974).

**On February 6, 1975**, Earl B. Ruth began his term as American Samoa's 11th appointed civil governor (until September 30, 1976).

**On February 7, 1876**, Malietoa Laupepa, appointed as "King of Samoa" by the Three Consuls and held aboard HMS *Barracouta*, was persuaded to sign a letter requesting the arrest of Samoa's "Premier" Albert Barnes Steinberger as "a liar and an impostor."

**On February 8, 1877**, Rear Admiral Charles Wilkes, USN, whose U.S. Exploring Expedition explored Samoa in 1839 and 1840, who first defined Antarctica as a continent, and whose expedition's collections were the basis of the Smithsonian Institution, died at his home in Washington, D.C., two months short of 79 years old. In 1920 he was interred at Site 1164, Arlington National Cemetery.

**On February 8, 1942**, the 2nd Marine Brigade's intelligence officer, Lieutenant Colonel William L. Bales, completed his report on Western Samoa, and presented it to his commanding officer, Brigadier Henry L. Larsen. His reported stated that "Upolu, with its "harbor facilities, road net and several potential airfield sites made it readily susceptible to base development." Savai'i, on the other hand, had no major safe anchorages and its lava-encrusted surfaces did "not offer airfield sites that could be developed quickly by the Japanese or anyone else." Bales concluded his report by saying that "In its present unprotected state, Western Samoa is a hazard of first magnitude for the defense of American Samoa. The conclusion is inescapable that if we don't occupy it the Japanese will and there may not be a great deal of time left."

**On February 8, 1904**, the Department of the Navy authorized the purchase of a site at Blunts Point, Togotogo Ridge, Tutuila for the construction of an observatory, and a trail leading to it.

**On February 8, 1944**, Captain Allen Hobbs relieved Captain John Gould Moyer and took office as American Samoa's 30th naval governor (until January 27, 1945).

## Development Bank gets \$172,500 in grant money from DOI

The Development Bank of American Samoa recently received a total of \$172,500 worth of grant funds from the US Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs.

DBAS president Utu Abe Malae explained that the first grant, which is approximately \$85,000, is to help pay for the cost of the financial and single audit for fiscal year 2007.

The second grant of \$50,000 is for GIS extension to help with the engineering and inspection section of the bank.

(Earlier this year in February, DBAS received \$170,000 from the Department of Interior for the implementation of a GIS for American Samoa. The money was to help pay for a 24-month GIS project that will allow the bank to check the surveys of existing real estate used as collateral for loans, as well as for new loan applications).

"This is a tremendous benefit to the community because the surveys are done accurately and professionally for each home loan applicant," Utu said.

He added, "This prevents erroneous surveys from being made, and saves money for applicants who then do not have to pay another surveyor for re-surveys and worse, paying for unnecessary litigation in court."

The \$37,500 grant, according to Utu, is for them to work together with the Territorial Registrar's Office in "computerizing" their nine databases (records).

Currently, DBAS is assisting the Territorial Registrar's office with automating their records with the ultimate goal of linking the GIS database at the Development Bank with property records at the Territorial Registrar's Office to provide accurate information and precision with regards to land parcel boundaries.

DBAS is doing what it can to get everything squared away, contributing computers and software applications, not to mention extensive staff hours to create a database for TRO and train the staff in maintaining and improving the database.

DBAS staff assisted TRO management in converting the first of its nine database libraries, "Native Land Titles" into a Microsoft Access database, in addition to training its staff in modifying records.

## Utu talks about HUD HOME program

President of the Development Bank of American Samoa Utu Abe Malae explained that in 2007, DBAS took in \$3 million dollars worth of applications "but will only be able to fund (really 'provide services' for) about \$750K of those applications."

This information corrects Lt. Governor Ipulasi Aitofele Sunia's comments during the State of the Territory Address earlier this month, where he said that DBAS was able to provide services for loans totaling \$3 million last year.

"Again, this demonstrates the great need versus limited funding available," Utu said.

"Our goal every year is to use all the funding available to fund as many qualified applicants as possible," he added. "We don't leave any loan money left unspent."

Between February 2006 and April 2007, there were 51-HUD HOME projects (*28-Rehabilitation/23-New Homes*) set up in the HUD-IDIS system under Program Year 2006 and previous year (2005 & 2004) funding.

"The proof of ASG and DBAS improvement in the implementation of the HUD funded HOME program is that all of our projects which were set-up and funded under Program Year 2006 (PY-06) were all completed within a one year period, before we started with our PY-07 application process to begin new projects," Utu reported.

He said that as of December 12, 2007, all 51 projects were completed and closed. Also, there are no more open activities for the HUD-HOME program from previous years; meaning, we are up to date on allocations and expenditures.

	<u>Projects</u>	<u>Rehab</u>	<u>New Homes</u>
PY-2004	5	1	4
PY-2005	32	23	9
PY-2006	14	4	10
Total Projects	51	28	23

According to Utu, ASG/DBAS monitors the grant from HUD to ensure that the funding has been fully committed within a two year period and that expenditures have been made within 5 years.

Since April 2005, the HUD-HOME Program process no longer includes oversight from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in Honolulu.

Utu explained that the ASG-Home Program Coordinator approves all disbursements from that point whereas before, the HUD office in Honolulu had to approve for draw downs and payments.

Now, ASG/DBAS handles its own application intake and review process, although HUD used to have oversight of this process as well as draw down requests and disbursements.

Utu said all applications are taken on a first come first served basis and are date/time stamped. Funding is also allocated on a first come first served basis to approved applications. *(Continued on page 6)*



## Office of Samoan Affairs planning ahead for upcoming Flag Day festivities

With Flag Day less than 3 months away, the Office of Samoan Affairs is ahead of its game, already announcing its plans and preparations for entertainment, activities, and sporting events to mark the territory's birthday.

Flag Day 2008 celebrations are scheduled to take place April 17-18 and the Flag Day committee, led by Lt. Governor Ipulasi Aitofele Sunia and Secretary of Samoan Affairs PC Mauga Tasi Asuega, has already met to discuss this year's agenda.

The list of entertainers includes the energetic but composed Samoa Police Band, and special performers from the Big Island of Savai'i, Samoa, Manu'a, and two villages (yet to be named), representing the eastern and western districts of Tutuila.

Of course, there's also the highlight of every Flag Day – the fautasi race – and sporting events which include the competitive cricket tournament.

The plans were announced by Deputy Secretary of the Office of Samoan Affairs, HTC Nanai Kalasa Afuola, during a press conference on Jan. 29. According to Afuola, it is uncertain at this point if Samoa will be entering a fautasi to compete in this year's race, which is something that most Samoa citizens residing in the territory are hoping for.

In recent years, fautasi teams from Samoa including the Little Rina and the Segavao (rowed by students of Don Bosco Technical College and skippered by a woman) have given local fautasi clubs a run for their money: winning coveted championships and going home with bragging rights, not to mention, the prize money.

Those hoping for a repeat of last year's high school performances will not get their wish, as Afuola has already announced that high schools are not being invited to perform this year so students can devote their time to schoolwork and studying.

The cricket league kicks off on Saturday, Feb. 1 at Fagaalu Park and includes ten men's teams and five women's teams. Division championship matches for both the men and women are scheduled to be played on April 16 at the Veterans Memorial Stadium in Tafuna.

Winners will receive championship trophies however, monetary prizes are yet to be determined not only for the cricket tournament but also the fautasi competition. Last year, Corona Beer, through local distributor Tautua Mo Oe and owner Frank Gaisoa, donated \$10,000 for the first prize winner of the fautasi race.

## Local economy to get a boost with the issuance of tax refund checks

Nearly \$1 million worth of tax refund checks were released this past Monday, in the first batch of refunds that will be issued during this year's tax filing season.

The Tax Office has been preparing for the tax season by updating and testing their computer system, in addition to printing all necessary tax forms and conducting orientation for staff members.

After government employees got their W-2 forms, hundreds rushed to file their taxes so they could get their refunds sooner than later.

The first batch of refunds included checks for some 450 tax payers who received a total of \$930,000 in refunds. Of that amount, \$330,000 was for local taxes while the other \$570,000 was for the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) which is federally funded.

Individuals filing simple tax returns can get help and assistance from Tax Office employees who have tables set up in front of their office on the ground floor (back side) of the Executive Office Building in Utulei.

Mandated documents include a picture identification card and a W-2. Failure to provide the required documents will result in unnecessary delays.

Tax checks are expected to be issued every two weeks or, if funds are available, every week.

The American Samoa Government maintains a Tax Reserve account to cover tax refunds and reportedly, there is \$3 million in the account.

During last year's tax filing season, ASG paid out just over \$4 million in local refunds while the Internal Revenue Service paid out \$7.8 million in Additional Child Tax Credits.

### ***American Samoa Commemorative Quarter***

Lieutenant Governor Ipulasi Aitofele Sunia invites the Territory's participation in submitting designs for a Territorial Quarter (25 cent coin) that will be issued by the U.S. Mint in 2009.

*All Designs must be submitted to the Office of the Governor by 4:00p.m on Wednesday, February 13, 2008.*

*The selection of the winning design will be based on the following criteria:*

1. **Coinability** – the design must be one that can be produced on a coin.
2. **Accuracy** – the concept or theme does represent the Samoan culture or history accurately.
3. **Appropriateness** – the design must be dignified and one that will make American Samoa and the rest of America proud.

#### **ASG RADIO PROGRAM**

**With: Gov. Togiola Tulafono**

**On: Showers of Blessings FM 104.7**

**Saturdays @ 7a.m.**

**Call: 699-8123/8124**

## **ASEPA wants to keep you in the know on how to maintain a potable water distribution system**

The American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency (ASEPA) wishes to inform the residents of American Samoa about the hazards associated with water system cross-connections and piping system backflow potential, which are two key concepts in maintaining a community-wide potable water distribution system.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), within water distribution systems, there may be points called cross-connections where non-potable water can be connected to potable water sources. These cross-connections can provide a pathway for backflow of non-potable water into potable sources.

Backflow can occur either because of reduced pressure in the distribution system (backsiphonage), or because of increased pressure from a non-potable source (backpressure). Backsiphonage may be caused by a variety of circumstances such as water main breaks, pipeline flushing, pump failure, or emergency firefighting water drawdown, while backpressure may occur when heating, cooling, waste disposal, or industrial manufacturing systems are connected to potable supplies and the pressure in the external system exceeds the pressure in the distribution system.

Both situations will reverse the directional flow of water, which is normally from the distribution system to the customer. In such instances, non-potable and potentially contaminated water from industrial, commercial, or residential sites flows back into the distribution system through a cross-connection. During incidents of backflow, these chemical and biological contaminants have been known to cause illnesses and deaths because the contamination affects other water service connections.

The number of annual backflow incidents which are actually reported is believed to be only a small percentage of the total number of backflow incidents which occur each year in the United States.

However, the risks posed by backflow can be greatly reduced through preventive and corrective measures. Preventative measures include the installation of backflow prevention devices and the implementation of operational programs to seek out and correct cross-connections within distribution systems or individual service connections. Corrective measures include activities such as flushing and cleaning the distribution system after a detected incident. These measures can help to reduce adverse health effects from any contaminants that may remain in the distribution system.

These concepts are very important to the public water supply and distribution system in American Samoa. ASEPA Director Fanuatele Dr. To'afa Vaiaga'e points out that "the existence of traditional village water systems in many areas greatly increases the potential for cross connections to occur. Many residences utilize both potable ASPA water and non-potable village water simultaneously. Sometimes the piping from these systems becomes inter-connected and creates cross connections which can result in backflow, backsiphonage, and backpressure."

Fanuatele further states that "whenever there is a risk of system contamination to occur due to a cross connection, an approved backflow prevention assembly (BFPA) must be installed just after the water service meter. Approved BFPAs will only allow water to flow in a single direction so that any water which enters a commercial facility or residential piping system must remain in that system until the water is utilized at that location."

In this manner, Fanuatele explained, "the water of other nearby customers and consumers is not contaminated by bad water from another location."

More information about BFPAs and cross-connection control can be obtained by contacting ASEPA's U.S. Public Health Service Engineer for Drinking Water, CDR Brad Rea, P.E. at 633-2304 during normal business hours.

## Community-based Fisheries Management Program Regulations

The Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources has completed a draft of the Community-Based Fisheries Management Program regulations. The document is available for public review, and comments are welcomed until February 25, 2008 at 4 p.m.

Community-Based Fishery Management program manager Selaina Vaitautolu-Tuimavave explained that the draft was compiled by DMWR staff and a private attorney, and this is the first time regulations have been drafted for this program.

“Once they are finalized as regulations, they can only be amended, but not re-drafted,” Vaitautolu-Tuimavave explained.

The draft is 15 pages long and is available in both hardcopy and electronic versions to any interested parties. Copies of the draft may be obtained from the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources – Fisheries Division.

The draft consists of information on what is prohibited and what is not, in a designated village marine protected area. The draft also details information on acts prohibited on a beach adjacent to a village marine protected area, prohibited acts that could end up in a stream leading to a village marine protected area, and penalty fines for these prohibited acts.

According to Vaitautolu-Tuimavave, the goal of the newly released draft is to provide legal support to the villages in the Community-Based Fishery Management Program under DMWR, and enhance enforcement capabilities of villagers and DMWR in enforcing village marine protected areas.

There is one Community-Based Fishery Management Program in the territory, housed at the DMWR, with ten existing villages participating in the program. The program creates a co-management regime between villages around American Samoa and the government to protect American Samoa’s fragile and unique coral reef ecosystems.

Villages in the program, along with DMWR, manage these resources by implementing Village Marine Protected Areas. These areas are protected from fishing activities for a certain period of time, with the intention that it will help sustain the resources for the future. Any questions, comments, or concerns can be forwarded to program manager Selaina Vaitautolu-Tuimavave at 633-4456.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources completed a draft of the Community-based Fisheries Management Program regulations. The document is available for public review and comments are welcome until February 25, 2008 at 4PM. Interested parties may obtain a copy from the Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources – Fisheries Division. Any questions regarding this notice please contact Selaina Vaitautolu-Tuimavave at 633-4456.



### FA'AALIGA

Ua mae'a ona fa'atulagaina e le Matagaluega o Alamanuia o le Sami ma le Vaomatua ni tulafono fa'ata'ita'i mo le Porokalame o le Puipuia o Gataifale Fa'asao i Nu'u ma afio'aga o Amerika Samoa. O lo'o iai nei se tusi tulafono ua mafai ona taga'i iai le mamalu o tagtanu'u ma aumaia ai ni faitioga po'o ni fautuaga. E tapunia lenei avanoa i le aso 25 o Fepeuary 2008 i le 4 afiafi. Mo ni isi fesili fa'amolemole vala'au mai ile 633-4456 mo Selaina Vaitautolu-Tuimavave.

### HUD Home Program *(from page 3)*

According to the DBAS president, not having HUD directly involved in the implementation of our local program meant the removal of a lengthy, frustrating burden for ASG and DBAS.

“This reduction was a tremendous relief to our customers,” he pointed out. “This really helped in expediting the expenditure of Home funds, and helped with completing the HOME projects in a timely manner. The key here was the good program monitoring of disbursements and ensuring that each project sticks with the timeframes given.”

The timeframes for project completion are approximately 90 days for repair, and 180 days for new construction. Timeframes depend on the contractors and the scopes of work but sometimes, circumstances make it hard to meet these timeframes due to bad weather or shortage of materials.

Utu said DBAS is targeting and catering to the need of our very low income families under the HUD-HOME Repair program for the neediest, through the Department of Commerce-CDBG funds.

Under HUD, a total of 203 applications were received by DBAS through the Program Year 2007 application in-take process. Of that number, 156 were from Tutuila and 47 were from Manu'a. A total of 45 approved applications are expected to set-up in the HUD-IDIS system to obligate funds made available from HUD this program year.

<u>Approved</u>	<u>Repair</u>	<u>New Homes</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Manu'a	20		\$200,000
Tutuila	25	7	\$576,000
			\$776,000